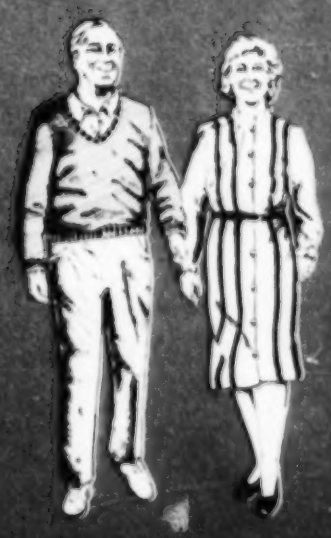
S E N I O R S

Advisory Council For Alberta



ALBERTA'S SENIORS:
DEMOGRAPHIC AND INCOME INFORMATION
BY HEALTH UNIT

Alberta
Senior Citizens Secretariat

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Alberta's Seniors: Demographic and Income Information by Health Unit

INTRODUCTION

This paper provides a brief description of the characteristics of the senior population in various regions of the province. It is based on data from the 1986 Census of Canada and from Health and Welfare Canada on persons age 65 and over in each of Alberta's 27 health units.

The information is intended to provide a picture of regional and local variations among the older population in Alberta, with the hope that it will be of help to those planning and delivering services for seniors.

Data from the 1986 Census of Canada were obtained on the following characteristics of persons age 65 in each of the health units: 1) age and sex distribution; 2) marital status by age and sex; 3) mother tongue; 4) living arrangements; 5) highest level of schooling; 6) labour force participation; 7) reported income. With the exception of mother tongue, for which the data are by age 65 and over only, the data are presented by age (65-74, and 75+) and by sex.[1] Health and Welfare Canada data on the numbers and percentages of Old Age Security (OAS) recipients (almost all persons age 65 and over) receiving OAS only and those receiving OAS and income supplementation in December, 1988 provide additional information on the level of income of seniors. This information is by age (65 to 74, 75 to 79 and 80 and over) and by sex.

Only tables for Alberta as a whole are included in this paper. A set of these tables is available for each health unit. Health Units are being provided with their own specific tables; others may be obtained from the Alberta Senior Citizens Secretariat.

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[1] Data are available from the Alberta Senior Citizens Secretariat on seniors owning and renting housing by sex and age.

There are some problems in presenting accurate census information on those health units with small senior populations, due to rounding of figures to the nearest 5, a procedure used by Statistics Canada to ensure confidentiality. As a result the data are presented in per centages.[2]

The living arrangements data are presented in five categories: (1) living with a spouse; (2) living in a family situation--that is, with one's own parents (and a very few seniors were!), or with an unmarried child or children, or living with a nuclear family other than one's own, that is, with a married child, another related family, or an unrelated family; (3) living in a non-nuclear family private household, that is, living with a sibling, friend, or one or more relatives; (4) living alone; (5) living in a collective dwellings, that is, in a dwelling of a commercial, institutional or communal nature, such as a lodge, nursing home, auxiliary hospital or hospital, a boarding home, rooming house, hotel, work or military camp, or a Hutterite colony.

The reported income, labour force participation and highest level of schooling data from the 1986 census are based on a twenty per cent sample of persons age 65 and over not living in institutional collective dwellings.

In looking at mother tongue, for all but Alberta as a whole and Edmonton and Calgary, the mother tongue is shown on the tables only where it comprises 1 per cent or more of the senior population (though the approximate information is available from the Senior Citizens Secretariat).

Figure 1 is a map showing the location of the various health units in the province. Table 1 shows the numbers of older persons (persons age 65 and over) in the various health units as of 1986, their per centage of the total population of the health unit, and the distribution of the total senior population among the health units.

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2 The census numbers are available from the Senior Citizens Secretariat.

Vegreville health unit, in 1986, had the highest percentage of seniors in its population (17.2 per cent) followed by Alberta East Central (14.5 per cent). Fort McMurray with 1.1 percentage 65 and over and High Level-Fort Vermilion at 3.2 per cent, had the lowest percentages of older people.

However, if we look at numbers of seniors and their distribution in the province, we see that close to half were living in the two major urban centres of Edmonton and Calgary. Edmonton (Local Board of Health area) had 46,920 persons age 65 and over or 25 per cent of the total number of older persons in the province, and Calgary (Calgary Health Services area) had 44,015 (23 per cent of the seniors in Alberta).

COMMENTS

In looking at the socio-demographic characteristics we divided the province into five general regions: Edmonton, Calgary, Northern, Central and Southern. Included in the Northern region are the health units of Athabasca, Fort McMurray, South Peace, High Level-Fort Vermilion and Peace River; in the Central region are Alberta East Central, Alberta West Central, Jasper, Leduc-Strathcona, Minburn-Vermilion, Northeastern Alberta, Red Deer, Stony Plain, Sturgeon, Vegreville, and Wetoka, in the Southern region are Banff, Barons-Eureka-Warner, Big Country, Chinook, Drumheller, Foothills, Lethbridge, Mount View and Southeastern Alberta.

The Northern region had 10,095 persons age 65 years and over or 5 per cent of the total seniors in the province, the Central region 52,540 seniors or 27 per cent, and the Southern region 37,480 seniors or 20 per cent. As mentioned before, Edmonton had 25 per cent and Calgary 23 per cent of the total persons age 65 and over in Alberta.

Age and Sex Distribution (see Table 2 for Alberta as a whole)

In Edmonton and Calgary, the proportion of women among seniors was somewhat above the provincial average of 56 per cent. There were about as many male as female seniors in the Northern region and in Northeastern Alberta, Stony Plain, Sturgeon and Vegreville.

Somewhat lower proportions of seniors above age seventy-five were found in Ft. McMurray, High Level, Leduc-Strathcona, Stony Plain and Mount View. The highest proportions of this older group of seniors were found in Peace River and Vegreville (both 44 per cent).

Marital Status (see Table 3 for Alberta as a whole)

The two urban centres were similar to the province as a whole, except that they had fewer seniors who had never married, and less of a preponderance of men in that group. The preponderance of never married males is especially noticeable in the Northern health units, with fairly large groups of both sexes who had never married.

In general, the two major urban centres had somewhat lower proportions of seniors who were married, with the health units in the other regions (particularly the Southern region) having higher per centages of married seniors, even among those age 75 and over. As would be expected some of these health units, particularly those in the Southern regions, had lower per centages of widowed seniors.

Mother Tongue (see Table 4 for Alberta as a whole)

English as a mother tongue was above the provincial average among Calgary seniors, but below average among Edmonton seniors. English was also below average in the Northern region, and in Leduc-Strathcona, Northeastern Alberta, Sturgeon, Barons-Eureka-Warner and Southeastern Alberta health units.

Non-English concentrations of more than fifteen per cent were found in the following health units Athabasca (Ukrainian), Fort McMurray (Native), High Level-Fort Vermilion (German, Native), Peace River (French), Leduc-Strathcona (German), Northeastern Alberta (Ukrainian, French), Vegreville (48 per cent Ukrainian), Barons-Eureka-Warner (German) and Southeastern Alberta (German).

Living Arrangements (see Table 5 for Alberta as a whole)

In the Northern region, a large proportion of seniors (59 per cent) lived with a spouse, well above the provincial average. Relatively few seniors (with the exception of Peace River) lived in collective dwellings.[3] In the South, 59 per cent lived with a spouse in Foothills and Mount View health units. In Calgary, those in collective dwellings numbered above average and in Edmonton, below average. Everywhere, there are more women than men in collective dwellings. The largest gender discrepancies in collective dwellings were in Minburn-Vermilion (8 per cent men, 15 per cent women) and Southern Alberta (6 per cent men, 11 per cent women).

Highest Level of Schooling (see Table 6 for Alberta as a whole)

Seniors in Calgary and, to a lesser extent, in Edmonton had years of schooling above the provincial average. Northern region seniors attained a level far below the provincial average (somewhat higher in South Peace). Lethbridge and Mount View health units had above average levels. Men in general had higher levels of schooling. The gender gap difference was most noticeable in urban areas. Virtually everywhere, the educational attainment of the 65-74 age group was higher than that of those over 75.

Labour Force Participation (see Table 7 for Alberta as a whole)

The participation rate was considerably below the provincial average in the two urban centres, particularly for men. The senior participation rate was highest in Big Country (28%), Drumheller (21%), and South Peace (20%), and lowest in Lethbridge (7%). In Big Country, the rate for seniors age 75 and above was fifteen per cent (24% for men).

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[3] There are relatively few lodges and nursing homes in the northern region.

Reported Income (see Table 8 for Alberta as a whole)

Seniors' reported incomes for Calgary ranged somewhat above that for the entire province, while the income distribution for Edmonton was almost identical with that of Alberta. In the Northern region incomes for seniors tended to be quite low; they were lowest in High Level-Fort Vermilion. In the Southern region, seniors' incomes tend to be higher than in the province as a whole, with high incomes most prominent in Foothills and Mount View.

Income Support (see Table 9 for Alberta as a whole)

This reflects the same north-south discrepancy as reported income. Here again, in December 1988 the income support received by seniors in Calgary was much lower than the provincial average and (somewhat lower) in Edmonton. In the North, those needing income support were in a strong majority throughout. In health units in the Central area, seniors needed somewhat above average income support everywhere except in Jasper, and most support in Northeastern Alberta. In the South, below average income support was needed by seniors in Banff, Big Country, Drumheller, Foothills, Lethbridge and Mount View health units.

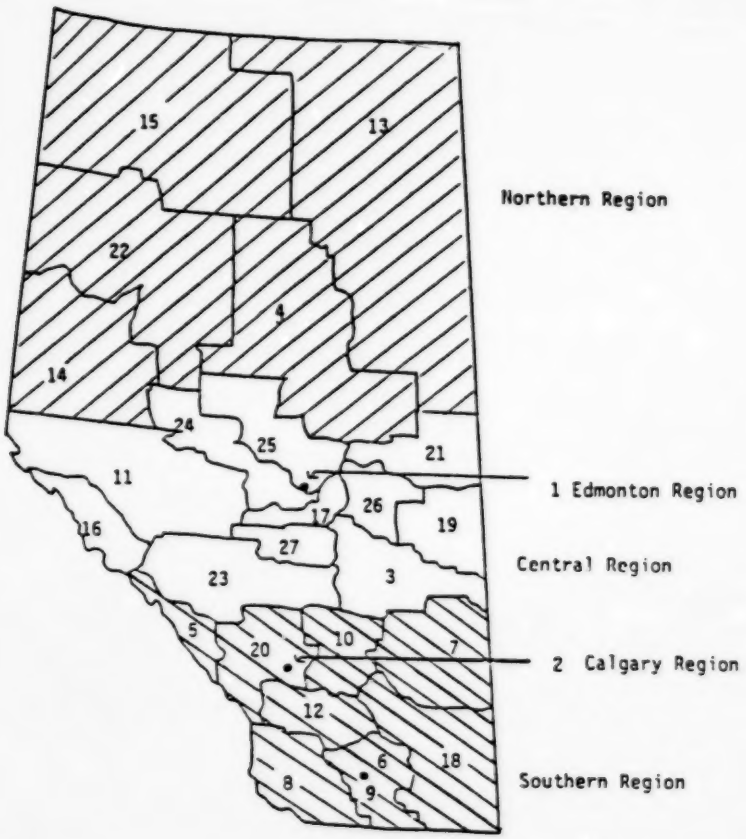
Table 1

Numbers Age 65+, their percentage of the Total Population and their percentage distribution by Health Unit
Alberta, 1986

	Numbers	Per Cent	Per Cent of Total Senior Population
Alberta 65+	191,160	8.1	
Vegreville	4,875	17.2	2.6
Total	28,420		
Alberta East Central	7,740	14.5	4.0
Total	53,410		
Lethbridge	7,600	12.9	4.0
Total	58,810		
Chinook	4,903	12.5	2.6
Total	39,400		
Big Country	1,505	12.2	0.8
Total	12,360		
Wetoka	4,350	12.0	2.3
Total	36,295		
Minburn-Vermilion	4,315	11.4	2.3
Total	37,775		
Drumheller	3,650	11.3	1.9
Total	32,425		
Southeastern Alberta	8,085	10.9	4.2
Total	74,355		
Foothills	3,445	10.7	1.8
Total	32,330		
Barons-Eureka-Warner	3,615	9.3	1.9
Total	38,830		
Red Deer	10,180	8.7	5.3
Total	117,470		
Edmonton 65+	46,920	8.3	24.5
Total	565,965		
Northeastern Alberta	3,730	8.0	2.0
Total	46,510		

Athabasca	2,300	7.6	1.2
Total	30,280		
Mount View	4,415	7.4	2.3
Total	59,475		
Peace River	2,740	7.4	1.4
Total	37,205		
Calgary	44,105	6.9	23.1
Total	635,860		
Sturgeon	6,245	6.7	3.3
Total	93,845		
South Peace	4,205	6.6	2.2
Total	63,290		
Stony Plain	3,675	5.7	1.9
Total	64,255		
Alberta West Central	2,160	5.6	1.1
Total	38,695		
Jasper	195	5.0	0.1
Total	3,925		
Leduc-Strathcona	5,075	5.0	2.7
Total	101,680		
Banff	335	4.3	0.2
Total	7,775		
High Level-Fort Vermilion	440	3.2	0.2
Total	13,925		
Fort McMurray	410	1.1	0.2
Total	36,650		

FIGURE 1
ALBERTA HEALTH UNITS



#	Name	#	Name
1	Edmonton	15	High Level-Fort Vermilion
2	Calgary	16	Jasper
3	Alberta East Central	17	Leduc-Strathcona
4	Athabasca	18	Southeastern Alberta
5	Banff	19	Minburn-Vermilion
6	Barons-Eureka-Warner	20	Mount View
7	Big Country	21	Northeastern Alberta
8	Chinook	22	Peace River
9	Lethbridge	23	Red Deer
10	Drumheller	24	Stony Plain
11	Alberta West Central	25	Sturgeon
12	Foothills	26	Vegreville
13	Fort McMurray	27	Wetoka
14	South Peace		

Table 2
Population 65+ by Age and Sex, 1986

Alberta Total

		M	F	Total
		%	%	%
	65-74	46	54	100
	75+	41	59	100
Total	65+	44	56	100

		M	F	Both Sexes
		%	%	%
	65-74	64	59	61
	75+	36	41	39
Total	65+	100	100	100

Source: Census of Canada, 1986.

TABLE 3

MARITAL STATUS
by Age 65+ and Sex, 1986

ALBERTA TOTAL

(percent)

Age and Sex		Never Married	Now Married	Widowed	Divorced	Separated
65-74	M	8	79	7	4	2
	F	5	54	35	4	2
	T	6	66	22	4	2
75+	M	9	65	22	2	2
	F	5	24	69	2	1
	T	6	41	50	2	1
Total 65+	M	8	74	12	3	2
	F	5	41	49	3	2
	T	6	56	33	3	2

Source: Census of Canada, 1986

TABLE 4

Mother Tongue by Age 65+, 1986

Alberta as a Whole

Mother Tongue	Per Cent
English	63.7
German	7.8
Ukrainian	7.3
French	2.7
Native	0.8
Italian	0.7
Portuguese	0.1
Spanish	0.1
Yiddish	0.1
Dutch	1.4
Russian	0.3
Polish	1.5
Finnish	0.1
Hungarian	0.7
Greek	0.1
Arabic	0.1
Punjabi	0.1
Chinese	1.7
Vietnamese	0.1
Tagalog-Philipino	0.2
Other	4.0
Multiple Resp.	6.6

Source: Census of Canada, 1986.

TABLE 5

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS
by Age 65+ and Sex, Alberta, 1986

ALBERTA TOTAL

(percent)

Age and Sex		Living with Spouse	Living in Family Setting (related/ non-related)	Living with Individuals (related/ non-related)	Living Alone	Collective Dwelling
65-74	M	77	3	3	13	3
	F	52	9	5	32	3
	T	64	6	4	23	3
75+	M	58	5	3	18	16
	F	20	10	6	41	23
	T	36	8	5	31	20
Total 65+	M	70	4	3	15	8
	F	39	9	5	36	11
	T	53	7	4	27	10

Source: Census of Canada, 1986.

TABLE 6

HIGHEST LEVEL OF SCHOOLING
By Age 65+ and Sex, 1986

ALBERTA TOTAL

(percent)

Age and Sex		Less than Grade 9	Grade 9-13 without Cert/Dip	Grade 9-13 with Cert/Dip	Trades Cert/Dip	Post Secondary without Cert/Dip	Post Secondary with Cert/Dip	University Degree
65-74	M	37	26	6	12	7	6	6
	F	34	33	6	5	7	10	3
	T	36	30	6	8	7	8	5
75+	M	54	22	3	8	6	4	4
	F	50	26	4	3	6	8	2
	T	51	25	3	5	6	6	3
Total 65+	M	43	24	5	11	7	5	5
	F	40	31	5	4	7	10	3
	T	41	28	5	7	7	8	4

Source: Census of Canada, 1986; 20 per cent sample of persons 65+ not living in institutional collective dwellings.

TABLE 7

LABOUR FORCE ACTIVITY
by Age 65+ and Sex, 1986

ALBERTA TOTAL

(percent)

Age and Sex		In Labour Force	Not in Labour Force
65-74	M	26	74
	F	8	92
	T	16	84
75+	M	10	90
	F	2	98
	T	5	95
Total 65+	M	21	79
	F	6	94
	T	12	88

Source: Census of Canada, 1986; 20 per cent sample of persons 65+ not living in institutional collective dwellings.

TABLE 8

INCOME GROUPS
by Age 65+ and Sex, 1986

ALBERTA TOTAL

(percent)

Age and Sex		Without Income	Less than $5000	$5000-$9999	$10000-$14999	$15000-$19999	$20000-$24999	$25000-$34999	$35000 And Over
65-74	M	2	4	25	24	15	9	11	12
	F	3	14	46	17	8	4	4	3
	T	2	10	36	20	11	7	7	7
75+	M	1	2	52	22	9	5	5	5
	F	1	4	65	16	6	3	3	2
	T	1	3	59	18	7	4	4	3
Total 65+	M	1	3	34	23	13	8	9	9
	F	2	11	53	16	7	4	4	3
	T	2	7	44	19	10	5	6	6

Source: Census of Canada, 1986; 20 per cent sample of persons 65+ not living in institutional collective dwellings.

TABLE 9

INCOME SUPPORT
By Age 65+ and Sex, December, 1988

ALBERTA TOTAL

Age and Sex		OAS only		OAS/GIS partial		OAS/GIS maximum		TOTAL	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
65-69	M	21,732	69	8,231	26	1,701	5	31,664	100
	F	23,135	63	11,630	32	1,901	5	36,666	100
	T	44,867	66	19,861	29	3,602	5	68,330	100
70-74	M	14,595	63	7,339	32	1,292	6	23,226	100
	F	15,700	55	11,087	39	1,849	6	28,636	100
	T	30,295	58	18,426	36	3,141	6	51,862	100
75-79	M	8,776	55	6,211	39	932	6	15,919	100
	F	9,565	45	9,832	46	1,957	9	21,354	100
	T	18,341	48	16,043	43	2,889	8	37,273	100
80+	M	6,132	40	7,744	50	1,464	10	15,340	100
	F	8,200	33	12,512	50	4,344	17	25,056	100
	T	14,332	35	20,256	50	5,808	14	40,396	100
Total 65+	M	51,235	59	29,525	34	5,389	6	86,149	100
	F	56,600	51	45,061	40	10,051	9	111,712	100
	T	107,835	55	74,586	38	15,440	8	197,861	100

Source: Health and Welfare Canada